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IX

GREENES GROATSWORTH OF WITTE: BOVGHT with a million of Repentance:

Describing the Folly of Youth, the falshood of Make-shift Flatterers, the miserie of the negligent, and mischieses of deceyving CVRTEZANS.

Published at his dying request.

AND,

Newly corrected, and of many errors purged.

Fœlicem, fuisse infaustum.

Rob. Green.

LONDON,
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S. William Cheshire

TO VVITTIE

Poets, or Poeticall Wittes.

A *witte*, that ranges this sublunarie *Maze*, and takes but *Nature* for its *Originall*, makes *Reason* and *Iudgement*, a payre of false spectacles, where-through to take an imperfect suruey of things *aboue earth*; and so leaping ouer the *Light* of *diuine direction*, falles hudwinckt into the pitfall of its owne Folly: For a *wit* vnsanctified, is the Diuels *Anuile*, whereon he forges the engines of *selfe-ruine*. This is the reason, that so many *witworn Ideots*, after they haue descended from the high stand of *Contemplation*, to looke into themselues, are forced (the day after the Fayre) to howle our this olde *Ballad* made in Hell:

Ingenio perij, qui miser ipse meo:
Wit, whither wilt thou? woe is me;
Th'hast brought me to this miserie.

Vnder the wings of a *wit naturall*, are hatcht these three *vnluckie Birdes*: *Impudence*, *Selfe-conceit*, *Emulation*. *Impudence* turnes the Key of *Contempt*, and lets in *hard Opinion* to passe in *Iudgement* against the *Generall*, still bearing out her owne *Disease* with a stolne face: her *forme* is reflected from the glasse of *Flatterie*, wherein shee showes fayre, others foule; and doting on *Figures* falsely presented, scornefully kickes downe perfect *Knowledge* to the lowest Region of Disgrace.

Selfe-conceit, shee prodigiously studies to put out the *Light of wit*, by seeming to know beyond the reach of *Reason*, as if shee had miraculously discouered some stand from off the earth, aboue the sight of *Humanitie*, from whence ouer-looking all, makes it her owne *glorie*, hypercritically to reproue others.

Emulation, she was nurc't by a shee-Toad; shee neuer lins swelling, till shee burst her selfe, and poysons others: Shee speakes none faire, but a Barber; and him, for feare too; lest he should show her the tricke of a Cut-throat: She will be *none*, where shee may not be *best*: Shee's euer strugling to clamber vp to the narrow toppe of absolute *perfection*, and there to sit alone, whilst the desertfull *Hopes* of true *Discretion*, willingly giue vp their *Care*, and silently content to stay *below*, or come *behind*. These prenominated, are the three bold Bayards, that iuttle and shoulder for a sitting place in this Worlds wide *Court of Requests*

guests, when *Vertue* and *Knowledge*, know it better manners to stand and wait.

The bestiall gudings of this fulsom-feeding age, fall vpon a piece of piping-hot *Poetrie*, as on a *Christmas Pie*, they dabble their durtie fingers in't; stuffe vp their stomackes; belch out a soure *Censure*, and then regardlesly thrust it to the lower end o'th table: so that, notwithstanding she come cladde in the richest habite of *Skill*, and pranked out in the liuelieſt colours of *Conceit*; yet before *Censures* blinking eye, she appeares but an ill-fauoured Dowdie.

Poetrie affoords better measure of *Charitie*, then *Poperie*: For, to lend the world a furnish of *Wits*, shee layes her *owne* to pawne: And for her *Humilitie*, that's ouer-running full: for shee will kisse the shadow of a gowtie-toes shadow, and lie crowching at the foote of an *Epistle*, to watch the fall of some *Great mans* gracefull *looke*; and at last, for her labour, perhaps, be popt i'th mouth with a *Churles Almes*, that's *Nothing*. *Poetrie* and *Beggerie* are *twin-born-brats*: they haue one *fate* from *Birth*, one *fall* to *Death*; and both *vnfortunate*.

Of all other *creatures*, your *Poet* liues most in, and most out of danger; and that in two respects: He liues most in danger, to perish for want of *Competencie*; and contrariwise, he liues most out of danger, for euer being rifled; because hee neuer caries any thing about him, worth playing the theefe for.

To be a *Poet*, and haue *means to bee so*, is not *to be* at all: for hee must put off *himselfe*, and compose his *Parts* after the *vulgar forme*; be *new*, with mens *new affections*: he must not run a counter-course, cut from the scent of those *Humours*, the present times approue: Aboue all, hee must deifie *Pride*; shee must haue tapers of *supple soothings*, set vp before her illustrious *outside*; no matter, if the *Soule* within, sitte poorely without *Light*. The true *Degree*, and iust *Height* of her swolne *Sublimitie*, must not bee taken, right *as it is*, but as it *seemes to be*: after this, *Imagination* steps out, and (as *Isis* Asse was) guls her with this beleefe; That those *Honours* are bestowed on her, when indeed they are otherwise offered vp to the *painted Idoll* she carries.

O Spirit of Distraction! That sacred *Learning*, the happie *Birth* of Heauen; who ha's *Reward* and *Riches* dwelling within her selfe; should be forc't by the furious Tyrant *want*, so to prostrate her vnblemisht *Bodie*, as to committ folly with *Earth*, and besoyle her State of *Cleerenesse*, for so grosse a benefite as Breath?

wit, may not vnaptly be termed, the worlds *goggle-eyde Lampe*; which illightning all, darkens its owne: and to feed others, deuoures it selfe: *wit* and *Honesty* cannot abide each others Company; for *Necessitie* is the *go-between*, to set 'em at odds. *wit* is a skilfull Midwife; it can deliuer its *owner* of a bigge-bellied

Purse,

Purse, and bring the same man to bed of a foule shirt. There's an English Prouerbe, that, *wit runs a wool-gathering*: and good reason too: for its commonly *thrid-bare*. A *Poet* & his *wit*, must be like *Adams* & his *Ape*; they must trudge together from place to place, to shew trickes for a liuing; and that too, (like a Witches) euer bare and base: Is not that *wit* superlatiuely foolish? which disburses large summes of *Labour*; and takes vpon trust, inestimable treasures of *Time*, for Doomes-day repayment, onely to purchase a *puffe of praise*; and yet at last, leaues to his Heyre nothing, but the Fee-simple of *Pouertie*? That *Life* therefore is but *Death* aboue-ground, which propounds *Griefe* its *Gaine*; and affliction its end and period.

But here I meete with an *Exit*: the *Prologue's* ended, and I must off: Now *Reader*, (for I will not call thee, *gentle*, till I know whether thou wilt bite or no) behold a drie and *withered shadow*, which once was *Greene*) appeare in his natiue colour; new dipt, and a fresh glosse set on him; ready to enter vpon the Stage of triall, to answere vpon's Cu, and speake his owne part.

Tours; if not, the care's taken,

I. H.

Bucks, and bringeth the same to bed of a male child.

There is an English Proverb, that, we have a [illegible] gibberish, and good reason too: for its commonly thus [illegible] Rich, [illegible] must be like a [illegible] &c. they must [illegible] to place to place to place, to [illegible] places, and that too, (like a [illegible] ches) only barrowed [illegible]. It not that we superfluously [illegible] which [illegible] burgomasters of [illegible] and [illegible] upon [illegible] intolerable [illegible] of Time, for Doomes-day-reckoning, only to put [illegible] a page of [illegible], and yet at last, leaves to us Here nothing, but the [illegible] of [illegible] That life therefore is but Dumb show-ground, which proponeth [illegible] Sense, and all [illegible] end and period.

But here I meete with an Exit: the Prologue's ended, and I must off: Now Reader, (for I will not [illegible] thee, gentle, till I know whether thou wilt bite or no) behold a [illegible] and [illegible] Barbar, which [illegible] (Grave) appeare in his native colour; now dig and a fresh gloss let on him; ready to enter upon the Stage of Mill, to answere upon's Cue, and speake his owne part.

Finis; Nor, the end's value,

I. H.

GREENES

Groatsworth of Wit.

IN an Iland bound with the Ocean, there was sometime a Citie situated, made rich by Marchandize, and peopled by long space, the name is not mentioned in the Antiquary, by time worne out by times Antiquitie, what it was it greatly skils not: but therein thus it happened. An olde new made Gentleman herein dwelt of no small credite, exceeding wealth, and large conscience: he had gathered from many to bestow upon one, for though he had two sonnes, he esteemed but one, that being as himselfe, brought up to be Gods bondman, was therefore held heire apparent of his ill gotten goods.

The other was a Scholler, and married to a proper Gentlewoman, and therefore least regarded, for tis an olde sayde Saw: To Loathing and Law, there's no greater foe, then they that nothing

know: Yet was not the Father altogether unlettered, for he had experience in a Nouerint, and by the treasurall learnings therein contained, had driuen many Gentlemen out of sundry fortunate countries: With he was, for he bare office in his Parish, and sate as formally in his fore-furde Gowns, as if he had beene a very vpright dealing Burges, he was religious too, never without a booke at his belt, and a bolt in his mouth, ready to shoote through his sinnefull neighbour.

And Latin he had some where learned, which though it were but little, yet was it profitable, for he had this Philosophy written in a Ring, *Tu ubicunque*, which precept he curiously obserued, being in sellf loue to religious, as he held it no point of Charity to part with any thing, of which he liuing might make sale.

But as all mortall things are momentanie, and no certainesse can be found in this vncertain world, so Gerisim, (for that shall be this Vsurers name) after many a gentle pang that had pinch'd his exterior parts, many a sucke of those eyes that mounted into Heauens presence, was at last with his last summons, by a deadly disease arrested, where against, when he had long contended, and was by Physitians giuen ouer, he calls his two Sonnes before him, and willing to perform the old Proueb, *Qualis vita, finis ita*, he thus prepares himselfe, and admonishes them. My Sonnes, (for so your mother says ye were) and so I assure my selfe one of you is, and of the other I will make no doubt.

Dearest the time is come, which I thought would

never

neuer haue approached, and we must now bee separated, I feare neuer to meete againe. This fiftaine yeeres daily haue I liued vexed with disease: and might I liue fifteene more, how euer miserably, I should thinke it happy. But death is relentlesse, and will not be intreated twiesse: and knowes not what good my gold might doe him: senselesse, and hath no pleasure in the delightfull places, I would offer him. In briefe, I think he hath with this fold my eldest Sonne beene brought vp in the Vniuersitie, and therefore accounts, that in riches is no Vertue. But you, my Sonne, (laying then his hand on the youngers head) haue thou another Spirit: for without wealth, life is a death: What is Gentry if wealth bee wanting, but base servile beggery. Some comfort yet it is vnto me, to see how many Gallants spring of noble parents, haue crouch't to Gorinius to haue sight of his golde: O golde, vetted golde, admired golde, and haue left their patrimonies to Gorinius, because they haue not returned by their day that ouzed creature? how many Scholiers haue written rimes in Gorinius praise, and received (after long rapping and reuerence) a fireperny tokened in signe of my superfluall liberality. Briefly, my young Lucanio, hath I haue beene reuerent thou seest, when honester men, I confesse, haue beene set faire off; for to bee rich, is to be any thing, wise, honest, worthiall, or what not? I tell thee, my sonne: when I came first to this Cittie, my whole wardrope was onely a suite of white sheepe skins, my wealth an old Groat, my wonning, the wide world. At this instant (O

 griefe

griefe, to part with it,) I have in ready coyne three
score thousand pounds, in Plate and Iewels, xv.
thousand, in bonds and specialties as much, in land
nine hundred pounds by yeare: all which, Lucanio,
I bequeath to thee, onely I reserue for Roberto,
thy wellreued brother, an olde Groate (being the stock
I first began with) (wherewith I wish him to buy a
greater worth of wit: for hee in my life hath reproued
my in mixer of life, and therefore at my death shall
not be contaminated with corrupt gaine. Here by
the way Gentlemen must I digresse, to shew the
reason of Gorinius present speech: Roberto being
come from the Academie to visit his father, there was
a great feast prouided, where for table talke, Rober-
to knowing his father, and most of the company to
bee execrable vsurers, inueyed mightily against that
abhorred vice, insomuch that hee vrged teares from
vsurers of their eyes, a compunction in some of their
hearts. Dinner being past, he comes to his father, re-
questing him to take no offence at his liberall speech,
seeing what he haw vttered was truth. Angry son (said
he) no by my honesty (a that is some what I may say
to you) but sweet fruit; and if thou canst perswade any
of my neighbors from lending vpon vsurie, I should
bee the more rustonvers; to which when Roberto
would haue replyed, he shut himselfe into his study,
and fell to telling out his money.

This was Robertos offence; now returne wee to
Sicke Gorinius; who after he had thus vnequally di-
stributed his goods and possessions, beganne to aske
his sonnes how they liked his bequest, rather for
mockery, and Roberto vrged him with nothing

more

more, then repentance of his sinnoke: to thine owne saide he, sonne boy, and come my Lucanio, let me giue thee good counsell before my death: as for you Sir, your bookes are your counsellors, and therefore to them I bequeath you. As Lucanio, my onely comfort, because I hope thou wilt as thy Father bee a gatherer, let me bleste thee before I die. Multiply in wealth my Sonne by any meanes possibly that thou mayest, onely flie Alchymie, for therein are more deceites, then her beggerly Artists haue words and yet are the wretches, more talkatiue then women. But my meaning is, thou shouldest not stand on conscience in causes of profite, but heape treasure vpon treasure, for the time of neede: yet seeme to be deuout, else shalt thou be hid vile: frequent holy exercises, graue company, and aboue all, vse the conuersation of young Gentlemen, who are so wedded to prodigality, that once in a quarter necessity knocks at their chamber doores: proffer them kindnes to relieue their wants, but bee sure of good assurance, giue faire words till dayes of payment come, and then vse my counsel, spare none: what though they tell of conscience (as a number will talke) looke but into the dealings of the world, and thou shalt see it but idle words. Seest thou not many perish in the streetes, and fall to theft for neede? whom small succor would releeue, then where is conscience, and why art thou bound to vse it more then other men? Seest thou not daylie Forgeries, periuries, oppressions, rackings of the poore, raysing of rents, inhanncing of duties, euen by them that should bee all conscience, if they meant as they speake: but Lu-

tanio, if thou reade well this Booke, and with that yee reaché him Machiauels workes at large,) thou shalt see what it is to bee so foolishly, as to make scruple of conscience, where profit presents it selfe.

Wellcome, thou hast an instance by thy threadbare brother heere, who willing to doome wrong, hath lost his Owne right: for who would wish any thing to him, that knowes not how to vse it.

So much Lucanio for conscience: and yet I know not what's the reason, but somewhat stings me inwardly when I speake of it. I father, sayde Roberto, it is the Worm of Conscience, that vrges you at the last houre to remember your life, that eternall life may follow your repentance. But sole, (sayde this miserable Father) I feele it now, it was onely a stitch. I will forward with my exhortation to Lucanio. As I sayde my Sonne, make spoyle of young Gallants, by insinuating thy selfe amongst them, and be not moued to thinke their Ancestors were famous, but consider their were obscure, and that thy Father was the first Gentleman of the name: Lucanio, then art yet a Bachelor, and so keepe thee, till thou meete with one that is thy equall, I meane in wealth, regard not beauty, it is but a bait to entice thy neighbours eye: and the most fayre are commonly most foule, die not too many familiars, for feio prove friends, and as easie it is to weigh the wind, as to dive into the thoughts of worldly gleeks. I tell thee Lucanio, I have seen foure score Gallants besides thesedde seuen, yet sale I neuer him, that I esteemed as my friend but gold,

that

that desired creature, whom I haue dearely loued, and found so firme a friend, as nothing, to me hauing it, hath been wanting. No man but may thinke dearely of a true friend, and so doe I of it, laying it vnder fure lockes, and lodging my heart therewith.

But now (Ah my Lucanio) now must I leaue it, and to thee I leaue it with this lesson, loue none but thy selfe, if thou wilt liue esteemed. So turning him to his study where his chiefe treasure lay, her loud cryed out in the wife mans words, *O mors quàm amara*, O death how bitter is thy memory to him that hath all pleasures in this life, and so with two or three lamentable groanes he left his life: and to make short worke, was by Lucanio his sonne enterred, as the custome is with some solemnity: But leauing him that hath left the world, to him that censureth of euery worldly man: passe wee to his Sonnes, and see how his long layed vp Roze is by Lucanio lookte into. The youth was of condition simple, shamefast and flexible to any counsell, which Roberto perceiuing, & pondering how little was left to him, grew into an inward contempt of his Fathers vnequall Legacy, and determinate resolution to worke Lucanio all possible iniurie: hereupon thus conuerting the sweetnesse of his loue, to the sharpe thirst of reuenge, he (as Enuie is seldome idle) sought out fit companions to effect his vnbrotherly resolution. Neyther in such a case is ill company sure to seeke, for the Sea hath scarce so many iopardies, as populous Cities haue deceiuing Syrens, whose eyes are Adamants, whose words are Witchcrafts, whose

dozes leade downe to death. With one of these female Serpents Roberto consorts, and they conclude what euer they compassed, equally to share to their contents. This match made, Lucanio was by his brother brought to the bush, where hee had scarce pruned his wings, but he was fast limed, and Roberto had what he expected. But that wee may keepe fortune, you shall heare how it fortuned.

Lucanio being on a time very pensiue, his brother broke with him in these termes. I wonder Lucanio why you are so discomfolate, that want not any thing in the world that may worke your content. If wealth may delight a man, you are with that sufficiently furnisht: if credite may procure a man any comfort, your word I know well, is as well accepted as any mans obligation: in this Citie are fayre buildinges and pleasant gardens, and ranse of solace, of them I am assured you haue your choyce. Consider brother, you are yong, then pleas not altogether in meditating on our fathers precepts: which howsoever they fauoured of profite, were most vnfauorly to one of your yeares applyed; You must not think but certaine Marchants of this Citie expect your company, sundrie Gentlemen desire your familiaritie, and by conuersing with such, you will bee accounted a Gentleman: otherwise a peasant, if ye liue thus obscurelie. Besides, which I had almost forgot, and then had all the rest been nothing, you are a man by nature furnished with all exquisite proportion, worthie the loue of anie courtie Ladie, be she neuer so amorous, you haue wealth to maintaine her, of women not little lon-

ged

gen for words to court her you shall not want, for my selfe will be your Secretary. Briefly, why stand I to distinguish abilitie in particularities, when in one word it may be said, which no man can gainsay, Lucanio lacketh nothing to delight a wife, nor any thing but a wife to delight him? My young master being thus claiude, and puft vp with his own praise, made no longer delay, but hauing on his holyday hose, he tricked himselfe vp, and like a fellowe that meant gaie sooth, he clapped his brother on the shoulder, and said. Faith brother Roberto, and yee say the word, let's gae seeke a wife while it is hote, both of vs together, Ile pay well, and I hope turne you loose to say as well as any of them all: Well, Ile do my best, said Roberto, and since yee are so forward, lets gae new and trie our good fortune.

With this, forth they walke, and Roberto went directly towards the house, where Lamilia (for so we call the Curtezan) kept her Hospitall, which was in the Suburbes of the Citie, pleasantly seated, & made more delectable by a pleasaunt Garden, wherein it was scituate. No sooner came they within kenne, but Mistresse Lamilia, like a cunning Angler made ready her chaunge of baytes, that shee might effect Lucanios bane: and to begin, she discouered from her window her beauteous inticing face, and taking a Lute in her hand, that shee might the rather allure, she sung this Sonnet with a delicious voyce.

Lamilias Song.

Fie, fie on blind fancie,
It hinders youths ioy:
Fayre Virgins learne by me,
To count loue a toy.
When Loue learned first the A B C of delight,
And knew no figures, nor conceited Phrase:
He simply gaue to due desert her right,
He led not Louers in darke winding wayes.
He plainely wild to loue, or flatly answered no,
But now who lists to proue, shall find it nothing so.
Fie, fie then on fancie,
It hinders youths ioy.
Fayre Virgins learne by me
To count loue a toy.
For since he learnd to vse the Poets pen,
He learnde likewise with smoothing words to faine
Witching chast eares with trothlesse tongs of men,
And wronged faith with falsehood and disdaine.
He giues a promise new, anon he sweareth no,
Who listeth for to proue, shall finde his changing so:
Fie fie then on fancie,
It hinders youthes ioy,
Fayre Virgins learne by me,
To count loue a toy.

While this painted Sepulchre was shadowing her corrupting guilt, Hiena-like, allurring to destruction, Roberto and Lucanio under the window kept even pace with every stoppe of her Instrument, but especially, my young Ruffler, (that before time like a Birde in a Cage, had bene prentise for three lives, or one and twenty yeres at least, to extreme Anarice his deceased Father) O twas a world to see, how he somtime simpered it, striving to set a countenance on his turnde face, that it might seeme of Wainescot proofe, to beholde her face without blushing: anon, he would strake his bow-bent leg as though he went to shote love arrowes from his shins: then wipte his chinne (for his beard was not yet growne) with a gold wrought handkercher, whence of purpose he let fall a handfull of Angels. This golden showre was no sooner rained, but Lamilia ceasst her song, and Roberto (assuring himselfe the sole was caught) came to Lucanio, (that stood now as one that has stare Medusa in the face) and awaked him from his amazement with these words. What in a trance brother? whence springs these vumpes? are ye amazed at this obiector long ye to become loves subiect? Is there not difference betwixt this detestable life, and the imprisonment you have all your life hitherto endured? If the sight and hearing of this harmonious beauty, worke in you effects of wonder, what will the possession of so divine an essence, wherein beauty and art dwell in their perfectest excellencie. Brother, said Lucanio, lets vse few words, and she be no more then a woman, I trust youle helpe me to here and if you do,

doe, well I say no more, but I am yours till death bee depart, and what is mine, shall bee yours, world without end, Amen.

Roberto smiling at his simplenesse helpt him to gather up his crept golde, and without any more circumstance leade him to Lamilias house: for of such places it may be said, as of hell.

Noctes atque dies patet atri ianua ditis.

So their doores are euer open to entice youth to destruction. They were no sooner entred, but Lamilia her selfe like a second Helen, court-like begins to salute Roberto, yet ties her wandring eye glance often at Lucanio: the effect of her entertainment consisted in these termes, that to her simple house Signior Roberto was welcome, and his brother the better welcome for your sake: albeit his good report confirmed by his present demeanor, were of it selfe enough to giue him deserued entertainment, in any place, how honourable soever: mutuall thanks returned, they led this prodigall child into a parlor garnished with gaudy portraitures of amiable personages, neere which, an excellent consort of musicke began at their entrance to play. Lamilia seing Lucanio thankfull, tooke him by the hand, and tenderly wringing him, bid these words. Welcome my Gentleman, I am very sorry that our rude entertainment is such, as no way may make your content: for this I haue noted since your first entring, that your countenance hath beene heauie, and the face being the glasse of the heart, assures me the same is not quiet:

would ye loth any thing here that might content you, say but the word, and assure yee of present deliuerance to effect your full delight. Lucanio being so farre in loue, as he perswaded himselfe without her graunt he could not liue, had a good meaning to vtter his mind, but wanting fit wordes, he stode like a trewant that lackt a Promptee, or a Plaier, that being out of his part at his first entrance, is faine to haue the boke to speake what hee should performe: Which Roberto perceyuing, replied thus in his behalfe. Madam, the Sunnes brightnesse dazleth the beholders eyes: the Maiestie of Gods, amazed humane men, Tullie Prince of Orators, once fainted, though his cause was good, and he that tamed monsters, stod amazed at beauties ornaments: then blame not this young man though hee replied not, for he is blinded with the beautie of your Sunne-darkening eyes, made mute with the celestiall Organs of your voyce, and feare of that rich ambush of amber coloured darts, whose points are leueld against his heart. Well Signior Roberto said the, how euer you interpret their sharpe leuell, be sure they are not bent to doe him hurt, and but that modesty blinds vs poore Maydens from vttering the inward sorrow of our minds, perchaunce the cause of griefe is ours, how euer men dye colour, for as I am a Virgin I protest, (and therewithall shee tainted her chekes with a vermilion blush) I neuer saw Gentleman in my life, in my eye, so gracious as is Lucanio, onely that is my griefe, that eyther I am despised, for that hee scornes for to speake, or else (which is my greater sorrow) I feare hee can-

cannot speake. Not speake (Gentlewoman) quoth Lucanio? that were a great madnesse: yes, I thanke God I am sound of wind and lim, onely my heart is not as it was wont: but and you bee as good as your word, that will soone be well, and so craving ye of more acquaintance, in token of my plaine meaning, receiue this Diamond, which my olde Father loued dearely, and with that deliuered her a Ring, wherein was a pointed Diamond of wonderfull worth. Which she accepting with a low conge, returned him a cold Reuerence for a fauour, tyed with a Trueloues knot, which he fastened vnder a fayre Iewell on his Bonnet felt.

After this *Diamedis & Glauci permutatio*, my young Master waxes franke, and the musicke continuing, was very fayrest in dancing, to shewe his cunning: and so willing them to play on a horn pipe, leaps on the pauement lustily with his leaden heeles, capering like a Crew of Signior Roccoes teaching, and wanted nothing but bells, to bee a Hobby hobbyn a morrice. But how he footed in his folly, and what euer he was, Lamilia counted excellent: her praise made him proud, insomuch, that if he had not been interrupted, he would rather have vsed in his dance, then left off to shewe his Mistresse delight. At last, reasonable perswaded, seeing the Table furnished, he was contented to cease, and setts himselfe to his victuals, on which (having before inhanced) he fed lustily, especially of a Woodcocke Pie, wherewith Lamilia his Carver, plentifully plyed him. Fall to (quoth he) having furnisht simply stomacks, and Lucanio thereby got leasure to

talke,

talke, falles to discourse of his wealth, his lantes, his bonds, his abilitie, and how himselfe with all his had, was at Madame Lamilias disposing: desiring her also to his Brother, to tell him simply what shee meant. Lamilia replyed. By swat Lucanio, how I esteeme of thee, mine eyes doe witnesse, that like handmaidens, haue attended thy beauteous face, euer since I first beheld thee: yet being loue that lasteth gathereth by degrees his liking: let this for that suffice: If I finde thee firme, Lamilia will bee faithfull: if fleeting, she must of necessitie be infortunate that hauing neuer seene any whom before she could affect, she should bee thus inuiteingly forsaken. Nay, said Lucanio, I pare say my brother here will giue his word, for that I accept your choiceness Lamilia, for with me your credit is better then your brothers. Roberto breake off their amorous prattle with these speeches. With eyther of you are of other so fond at the first sight, I doubt not but time will make your loue more firme. Yet Madam Lamilia, although my brother and you bee thus forward, some crosse chaunce may come: for Multa cadunt inter calicem supremaque labra. And for a warning to teach you both wit, Ile tell you an old wiues tale.

Before you goe on with your Tale (quoth Mistresse Lamilia) let me giue you a caueat by the way, which shall be figured in a Fable.

Lamilias

Familiaes Fable.

THe Fox on a time came to visit the Gray, partly for kindred, chiefly for craft: and finding the hole empty of all other company, saving onely one Badger, enquiring the cause of his solitarinesse, he described the sudaine death of his dam and Sire, with the rest of his consorts. The Fox made a Friday face, counterfeiting sorrow: but considering that death's stroke was vncurable, perswades him to seeke some fit mate wherewith to match. The Badger sood agreede, so forth they went, and in their way met with a wanton one straggling from the folde: the Fox bad the Badger play the tall Stripling, and strout on his Tiptoes: for (quoth he) this elwis Lady of all these lands, and her brother chiefe Welweather of sundry flockes. Wo be thereby the Foxes perswasion, there would bee a perpetuall league betweene her harmlesse kindred, and all other deuouring beasts, for that the Badger was to them all allied: seduced shee yeelded: and the Fox con-

conducted them to the Badgers habitation. Where drawing her aside vnder colour of exhortation, puld out his throate to satisfie his greedy thirst. Here I should note, a yong whelpe that viewed their walk, informed the Shepheard of what happened. They followed and trayned the Fox and Badger to the hole, the Fox aforo had craftily conuayed himselfe away, the shepheard found the Badger raging for the ewes murther, his lamentation being holde for counterfeit, was by the shepheards dogge wearied. The Fox escaped: the ewe was spoyled, and euer since betweene the Badgers and the doggs, hath continued a mortall enmitie: And now he auised Roberto (quoth she) goe forward with your Tale, sake not by the insinuation to turne our mirth to sorrow. Good Lamilia (quoth he) you feare what I meane not, but how euer you take it, Ile forward with my Tale.

Robertoes Tale.

IN the North partes there dwelt an olde Squire, that had a yong daughter his heyre, who had (as I know Madam Lamilia you have had) many youthfull Gentlemen that long time sued to obtaine her loue. But shee knowing her owne perfection (as women are by nature proude) would not to any of them vouchsafe fauour: insomuch that they perceyuing her relentlesse, shewed themselues not altogether witlesse, but left her to her fortune, when they found her frowardnesse. At last it fortuned among other Strangers, a Farmers sonne visited her fathers house: on whom at the first sight she was enamored, he likewise on her. Tokens of loue past betwixt them, eyther acquainted others Parents of their choyse, and they kindly gaue their consent. Short tale to make, married they were, and great solemnitie was at the wedding feast. A young Gentleman that had bene long a Suter to her, hering that the Sonne of a Farmer should be so preferred,

cast in his mind by what meanes (to marre their merriment) he might steale away the Bride. Hereupon he conferres with an olde Beldam, called mother Gunby, dwelling thereby, whose counsell having taken, he fell to his practise and drift, and proceeded thus. In the afternoone when dancers were very busie, he takes the bride by the hand, and after a turn or two, tels her in her eare, he had a secret to impart vnto her, appointing her in any wise, in the euening to finde a time to conferre with him: she promised she would, and so they parted. Then goes he to the Bridegroom, and with protestations of entire affects protests that the great sorrow he takes at that which he must vtter, whereon depended his especiall credite, if it were knowne the matter by him should be discouered. After the Bridegroomes promise of secresie, the Gentleman tels him, that a friend of his received that morning from the Bride a letter, wherein shee willed him with some fifteen horse to await her comming at a Parke side, for that shee detested him in her heart as a base Country Hinde, with whome her Father compelled her to marry. The Bridegroome almost out of his wits, beganne to bite his lippe. Nay, sayth the Gentleman, if you will by me be auised, you shall saue her credit, win her by kindnesse, and yet preuent her wanton complot. As how, sayd the Bridegroome? Marry thus sayde the Gentleman: In the euening (for till the Guesters begone shee intends not to gadde) get you on horseback, and seeme to bee of the company that attends her comming. I am appointed to bring her from the house to the Parke, and from thence fetch a wind-

ing compasse of a mile about, but to turne back old mother Gunbyes house, where her louer my friende abides, when shee alights, I will conduct her to a chamber far from his lodging, but when the lightes are out, e she expects her adulterous copesmate, your selfe (as reason is) shall prouo her bedfellow, where priuately you may reprouo her, and in the morning early returne home without trouble. As for the gentleman my friend, I will excuse her absence to him, by saying, she mocke this with her maide in steade of her selfe, whom when I knew at her lighting, I disdayned to bring her vnto his presence. The bridegroome gave his hand it should be so.

Now by the way we must vnderstand, this mother Gunby had a Daughter, who all that day sate heauily at home with a Willow Garland, for that the Bridegroome (if hee had dealt faithfully) should haue wedded her before any other. But men (Lamilia) are vnconstant, many now a dayes makes the match, or else the match is marde.

But to the matter: the Bridegroome and the Gentleman thus agreede, hetoke his time, conferred with the Bride, perswaded her that her husband (notwithstanding his fayre shew at the marriage) had sworne to his olde swete heart, their neighbour Gunbyes Daughter, to bee that night her Wedde-fellow: and if shee would bring her Father, his Father, and other friendes to the house at midnight, they should find it so.

At this the yong Gentlewoman inwardly vert to be by a peasant so abused, promised if she saw likelihood

lihod of his slipping away, that then she would doe as he directed.

All this thus sorting, the olde womans daughter was trickly attyred, ready to furnish this pageant, for her olde mother prouided all things necessary.

Well, Supper past, dauncing ended, all the guests would home, and the Bridegroome pretending to bring some friend of his home, got his horse, and to the Parke side he rode, and stayed with the horsemen that attended the Gentleman.

Anon came Marian like Dittrie Wine e mounted behind the Gentleman, away they past, fetcht they compasse, and at last alight at an old wives house, where sodenly she is conuayed to her chamber, and the bridegroome sent to keepe her company, where he had scarce deuised how to begin his exhortation, but the father of his bride knockt at the chamber door: at which being somwhat amazed, yet thinking to turne it to a iest, sith his wife (as he thought) was in bedde with him, he opened the dore, saying, Father you are heartily welcom, I wonder how you found vs out here, this deuise to remoue our selues, was with my wiues consent, that we might rest quietly without the maids and batchelers disturbing vs. But where is your wife said the gentleman: why here in bed said he. I thought quoth the other, my daughter had borne your wife, for sure I am to day she was giuen you in marriage. You are merrily disposed said the Bridegroome, what thinke you I haue another wife? I thinke but as you speake, quoth the Gentleman, for my Daughter is below, and you say your wife is in the bed. Below (sayde he) you are a merry man,

and with that cailing on a night gowne, he went downe, where when he saw his Wife, the Gentlewman his Father, and a number of his friendes assembled, he was so confounded, that how to behaue himselfe he knew not, onely he cryed out that he was deceiued. At this the olde Woman arriued, and making her selfe ignorant of all the whole matter, enquires the cause of that sudden tumult. When she was tolde the new Bridegroome was found in bed with her daughter, she exclaimed against so great an iniurie: Marian was called in quorum: she inuitted it was by his allurement; he being condemned by all their consents, was iudged vnworthy to haue the Gentlewoman vnto his wife, and compelled (for escaping of punishment) to marrie Marian: and the young Gentleman (for his care in discouering the the Farmers sons lewdnes) was recompenst with the Gentlewomans euer during loue.

Mooth Lamilia, and what of this? Nay, nothing sayde Roberto, but that I haue tolde you the effects of fouaine loue: yet the best is, my brother is a maiden Bacheler, and for your selfe, you haue not bene troubled with many suters. The fewer the better, said Lucanio. But brother, I con you little thanks for this tale, hereafter I pray you vse other Table talke. Lets then end talke, quoth Lamilia, and you (Signior Lucanio) and I will goe to the Chesse. To Chesse, sayde he, what meane you by that? It is a game, sayde she, that the first danger is but a checke, the worst, the giuing of a mate. Well, said Roberto, that game ye haue been at already then, for you checkt him first with your beauty, and gaue your

selfe

selfe for mate to him by your bounty. That is well taken brother, sayde Lucanio, so haue we past our game at Cheste. Will yée play at Tables then, said she? I cannot quoth he, for I can gée no further with my game, if I bee once taken. Will yée play then at Cardes. I sayde he, if it be one and thirtie. Thats fooles game, sayde she: Wée all to Hazarde, said Roberto, and brother you shall make one for an houre or two: contented quoth he: So to dice they went, and fortune so fauoured Lucanio, that while they continued square play, he was no looser. Anon reforage came about, and his Angels being double winged, flew cleane from before him, Lamilia being the winner, prepared a banquet, which finished, Roberto aduised his brother to depart home, and to furnish himselfe with more crownes, least hee were outcrackt with new commers.

Lucanio loath to be outcountenanst, followed his aduise, desiring to attend his returne, which he before had determined but requested: for as sooneas his brothers backe was turned, Roberto begins to reckon with Lamilia, to be a sharer as well in the money deceitfully wonne, as in the Diamond so wilfully giuen. But shee secundum mores meretricis, iested thus with the Scholler. Why Roberto, are you so well read, and yet shew your selfe so shallowe witted, to blame Women so weake of conceit, that they sée not into mens demerites. Suppose (to make you my stale to catch the Woodcocke your brother) that my tongue ouerrunning mine intent, I speake of liberall reward: but what I promised, there is the point: at least what I part with, I wil

bee

be well aduised. It may bee you will thus reason: Had not Roberto trained Lucanio vnto Lamilias loue, Lucanio had not now borne Lamilias pay, therefore, sith he Roberto the possesseth her paine, Roberto merites an equall part. Ignominious aduiso if so you reason, as well you may reason thus: Lamilias dowgs hath bitten her a Dare, therefore his Pistris must make him a pastie. No more preuentlesse Post, than art beguiler in me, and yet I wonder how thou conceiest, thou hast beene so often beguiler. But it fareth with licentious men, as with the chased Boze in the streame, who being greatly refreshed with swimming, neuer feeleth any fin art vntill he perish, securelie wounded with his own weapons. Reasonlesse Roberto, that having but a Brokers place, asked a Lenders reward. Faithles Roberto, that hast attempted to betray thy brother, irreligiouslie forsaking thy wife, seruedst beene in thy Fathers eye an abiect: thinkest thou Lamilia so loose, to consort with one solitude. No hypocrite, the swet Gentleman thy brother, I will till death loue, and the while I liue loath. This share Lamilia giues thee, other getest thou none.

As Roberto would haue replied, Lucanio approached: to whom Lamilia discourst the whole secrit of his brother, and neuer rested intimating malitious arguments, till Lucanio bitterly refused Roberto for his brother, and for euer forbad him of his house. And when he would haue vsed reasons, and formed excuse, Lucanio impatience (vrged by her importunat malice, forbad all reasoning with them that were reasonlesse, and so giuing him Iacke Drums entertain-

tainement, shut him out of doors: whom we still follow, and leaue Lucanio to the mercy of Lamilia, Roberto in an extreme extasie, rent his hayre, curst his destinie, blamed his trecherie, but most of all exclaimed against Lamilia: and in her against all enticing Curtizans, in these tearmes.

What meant the Poets to inuectiue verse.
To sing Medeas shame, and Scillas pride,
Calipsoes charmes, by which so many dide?
Onely for this, their vices they rehearse,
That curious wits which in the world conuerse
May shun the dangers and entising shoes
Of such false Syrens, those home breeding foes
That from their eyes their venome do disperse.
So soone kils not the Basiliske with sight,
The Vipers tooth is not so venemous,
The Adders toung not halfe so daungerous,
As they that beare the shadow of delight,
Who chain blind youths in tramels of their hayre,
Till wast brings woe, and sorrow hastes despayre.

With this he lais his head on his hand, and leant his elbow on the ground, sighing out sadly,

Heu patior telis vulnera facta meis.

On the other side of the hedge sate one that heard his sorrow, who getting over, came towards him, e brake off his passion. When he approached, he saluted Roberto in this sort.

Gentleman quoth he (for so you seeme) I haue by

chances heard you discourse some part of your griefe, which appeareth to be more then you will discouer, or I can conceit. But if you vouchsafe such simple counsel as my ability will yield, assure your selfe, that I will endeuour to doe the best, that eyther may procure your profit, or bring you pleasure: the rather, for that I suppose you are a Scholler, and pittie it is men of learning should liue in lacke.

Roberto wondring to heare such good words, for that this yong age affordes sete that seldome of vertue, returned him thankefull gratulations, and (vrged by necessitie) vttered his present griefe, beseeching his aduise how he might be imployed. Why, easily quoth he, and greatly to your benefit: for men of my profession get by Schollers their whole liuing. What is your profession, sayde Roberto? Truly sir, sayde he, I am a player. A Player, quoth Roberto, I take you rather for a Gentleman of great liuing, for if by vertuous habits men should be censured, I tell you, you would be taken for a substantiall man. Or am I where I dwell (quoth the Player) reputed able at my proper cost, to build a Windmill. What though the world once went hard with me, when I was fayne to carry my playing Fardes a fot backe: Tempora mutantur, I know you know the meaning of it better then I, but I thus construe it, it is otherwise now: for my very share in playing apparrell, will not be solde for fiue hundred pounds: surely (sayde Roberto) it is strange, that you should so prosper in that vaine practise, for that it seemes to me your voyce is nothing gracious. Say then, sayd the Player, I mislike your iudgement: Why, I

am

am as famous for Delphargus, and the king of Fairies, as euer was any of my time. The twelue Labours of Hercules haue I terribly thundered on the Stage, and played their Scenes of the Diuell in the highway to heauen. Haue ye so (said Roberto) then I pray you pardon me. Nay more (quoth the player) I can serue to make a pretty speech, for I was a country Author, penning at a morall, for it was I that pend the Morall of mans wit, the Dialogue of Diues, and for seuen yeres space was absolute interpreter of the Puppets. But now my Almanache is out of date.

The people make no estimation
Of Morals, teaching Education.

Was not this pretty for a plaine-cloue extempore? if ye will yee shall haue more. Nay, it is enough, said Roberto, but how mean you to vse me? Why sir, in making Plays, saye the other, for which you shall be well paied, if you will take the paine.

Roberto perceiuing no remedie, thought it best to respect his present necessitie, to trye his witte, went with him willingly: whe longed him at the townes end in a house of retayle, where what happened our Host, you shall hereafter heare. There by conuersing with bad company, hee grew A malo in peius, falling from one vice to another, and so hauing found a heine to finger crowns, hee grew ranker then Lucanio, who by this time began to drope, being thus dealt withall by Zamilia. Shee hauing bewitched him with her enticing wiles, caused him to con-

 sume

sume in lesse then two yeares, that infinite treasure gathered by his Father, with so many a poore mans curse. His lands solde, his Jewels pawnde, his money wasted, hee was rattooned by Lamilia that had cozened him of all. Then walked he like one of D. Humfreyes Squires, in a threed-bare cloake, his hose drawne out with his heeles, his hose vnteamed least his feete should sweate with heate: now (as witlesse as he was) he remembred his fathers wordes, his kindnes to his brother, his carelessnesse of himselfe. In this sorrow hee sate downe on pennilesse bench, where when Opus and Vsus solde him by the chimes in his stomacke, it was time to fall vnto meate, he was faine with the Camelion to feed vpon the aire and make patience his repast.

While he was at his feast, Lamilia came flaunting by, garnished with the iewels whereof thee beguiled him, which sight serued to close his stomacke after his cold cheare. Roberto hearing of his brothers boggerie, albeit he had litt teremorse of his miserable state, yet did hee seeke him out, to vse him as a property, whereby Lucanio was some what prouided for. But being of simple nature, he serued but for a blocke to whet Robertoes wit on: which the poore sole perceiuing, he forsake all other hopes of life, and fell to be a notorious Pandar, in which detested course he continued till death. But Roberto now famoused for an Arch-playmaking Poet, his purse like the sea, sometime swelling, anon like the same sea fell to a low ebbe, yet seldome he wanted, his labours were so well esteemed. Marry this rule hee kept, what euer he gaged aforehand, was the certaine

taine meanes to vnbinde a bargaine, and being asked why he so sleightly dealt with them that did him good. It becomes me, sayth he, to be contrarie to the world, for commonly when vulgar men receiue earnest, they doe performe, when I am payd any thing afore hand, I breake my promise. He had shifte of lodgings, where in euery place his hostesse witte vp the iwfull remembrance of him, his Launderesse and his boy, for they were euer his in houshold, besides retayners in sundrie other places. His company were lightly the lewdest persons in the land, apt for pilferie, periurie, forgerie, or any villanie. Of these he knew the caste to cogge at carues, cosin at Dice, by these he learned the legerdemaines of nips, foysts, conicatchers, crosbyters, lifts, high Lawyers, and all the rabble of that vncleane generation of vipers: and pithilie could hee paint out their whole courses of craft: So cunning he was in all crafts, as nothing rested in him almost but craftinesse. How often the Gentlewoman his wife laboured bainely to recall him, is lamentable to note; but as one giuen ouer to all lewdnes, he communicated her sorrowfull lines among his lose truls, that iested at her bootless laments. If he could any way get credit on scores, hee would then brag his Creditors carried stones, comparing euery round circle to a groning O. procured by a painfull burthen. The shameful end of sundry his consorts, deservedly punished for their amisse, wrought no compunction in his heart: of which one, brother to a brethell he kept, was trust vnder a tree, as round as a ball.

To some of his swearing companions thus it hap-

nud, A crue of them sitting in a Tauerne carowsing, it fortuned an honest gentleman and his friend to enter their roome, some of them being acquainted with him in their domineering drunken daine, would haue no nay, but wo wo he must sit with them, being placed, no remedy there was, but he must needs keep ruen compasse with their vnseemly carrowsing: which perfitting, they fell from high words to found stroke, so that with much ado the Gentleman saued his owne, and flitted from their companie. Being gon, one of these tipplers forsooth lackt a golde ring: the other swore they saw the Gentleman take it from his hand. Vpon this the Gentleman was inuited before a Iudge, these honest men are deposed: whose wisdome weighing the time of the vsuale, gaue light to the Iury, what power wine swilling poyson had, they according vnto conscience found the Gentleman not guilty: and God released by that verdict the innocent.

Mithy his accusers thus it fared: one of them for murther was worthily executed: the other, neuer since prospered: the third, sitting not long after vpon a lusty horse, the beast bred suddenly vnder him. God amend the man.

Roberto euery day acquainted with these examples, was notwithstanding nothing bettered, but rather hardened in wickednes. At last was that place fulfilled, God warneth men by dreames and visions in the night, and by knowne examples in the day: but if he returne not, he comes vpon him with iudgement that shall be felt. For now when the number of deceites vsuled Roberto bad put vsull almost to all

men,

men, his immeasurable drinking had made him the perfect image of the dropsie, and the loathsom scourge of Lust, tyrannized in his bones: Liuing in extreme pouerty, and hauing nothing to pay but chalk, which now his Host accepted not for currant, this miserable man lay comfortlesly languishing, hauing but one great left (the iust proportion of his Fathers Legacie) which looking on, he cryed, O now it is too late, too late to buy wit with that: and therefore will I see if I can sell to careless youth what I negligently forgot to buy.

Here (Gentlemen) breake I off Robertos speech whose life in most part agreeing with mine, found onelsels punishment as I haue done. Hereafter suppose me the said Roberto, and I will go on with that he promised: Greene will send you now his groatsworth of witte, that neuer shewed a mites worth in his life: and though no man now be by, to bee mee good, yet ere I die, I will by my repentance indeuor to do all men good.

Deceyuing world that with alluring toyes,
Hast made my life the subiect of thy scorne:
And scorneſt now to lend thy fading ioyes,
Toutlength my life, whom friends haue left forlorn
How well are they that die ere they be borne,
And neuer see thy sleights, which few men shun
Till vnawares they helpelesse are vndone.

Oft haue I sung of loue and of his fire,
But now I finde that Poet was aduisde.
Which made full feasts increasers of desire,

And

And proues weak loue was with the poor despiſde,
For when the life with food is not ſuffiſde,
What thoughts of loue, what motion of delight,
What pleaſance can proceed from ſuch a wight?

Witnes my want the murderer of my wit,
My rauiſht ſenſe of wonted fury reft,
Wants ſuch conceit, as ſhould in Poems fit,
Set downe the ſorrow wherein I am left,
But therefore haue high heauens, their gifts bereft
Becauſe ſo long they lent them me to vſe,
And I ſo long their bounty did abuſe.

O that a yeere were granted me to liue,
And for that yeere my former wits reſtorde,
What rules of life, what counſell would I giue?
How ſhould my ſinne with ſorrow then deplore?
But I muſt die of euery man abhorde,
Time looſely ſpent will not againe be wonne
My time is looſely ſpent, and I vndone.

O horrenda famæ, how terrible are thy aſſaults? but *Vermis conſcientiæ* more wounding are thy ſtings. Ah Gentlemen, that liue to reade my broken and confuſed lines, looke not I ſhould (as I was wont) delight you with vaine fantaſies, but gather my follies altogether, and as you would deale with ſo many parricides, caſt them into the fire: call them Telegones, for now they kill their Father, and euerie lewd line in them written, is a deep piercing wound to my heart, euery idle houre ſpent by any in reading them, brings a million of ſorrowes to my ſoule.

O that the teares of a miserable man (for never yet was any man yet more miserable) might wash their memorie out with my death, and that those works with mee together might be interre. But sith they cannot, let my last worke witnesse against them with mee, how I detest them. Black is the remembrance of my blacke works, blacker then night, blacker then death, blacker then hell.

Learne wit by my repentance (Gentlemen,) and let these few rules following bee regarded in your lives.

1 First, in all your actions set God before your eyes, for the feare of the Lord is the beginning of wisedome: Let his word be a lanterne to your feet, and a light vnto your pathes, then shall you stand as firme rockes, and not be moued.

2 Beware of looking backe, for God will not bee mocked, of him that hath receyued much, much shall be demanded.

3 If thou bee single, and canst abstaine, turne thy eyes from vanitie, for there is a kind of women, bearing the faces of Angels, but the hearts of Deuils, able to intrap the elect if it were possible.

4 If thou be married, forsake not the wife of thy youth to follow strange flesh, for whoremongers & adulterers the Lord will iudge. The dore of a Harlot leadeth downe to death, and in her lippes there dwels destruction: her face is decked with odors, but she bringeth a man to a morsell of bread and naketnes: of which my selfe am instance.

5 If thou be left rich, remember those that want, and so deale, that by thy wilfulnesse thy selfe want

not: Let not Tauerners and Victualers bee thy Executors, for they will bring thee to a dishonourable graue.

6 Oppresse no man, for the crie of the wronged ascendeth to the eares of the Lord: neither delight to encrease by Vsurie, least thou lose thy habitation in the euerlasting Tabernacle.

7 Beware of building thy house to thy neighbors hurt, for the stones will crie to the timber: Men were layde together in blood: and those that so erect houses, calling them by their names, shall lye in the graue like sheepe, and death shall gnaw vpon their soules.

8 If thou bee poore, be also patient, and strive not to grow rich by indirect meanes, for gods so gotten shall vanish away like smoake.

9 If thou be a father, master, or teacher, ioyne good examples with good counsell, else little auayle Precepts where life is different.

10 If thou be a son or seruant, despise not reprooſe, for though correction be bitter at the first, it bringeth pleasure in the end.

Had I regarded the first of these rules, or bene obedient at the last, I had not now at my last ende, been left thus desolate. But now, though to my selfe I giue Consilium post facta, yet to others they may serue for timely precepts. And therefore (while life giues leaue) will send warning to my olde comforts which haue liued as lasciuie as my selfe, albeit weaknesse will scarce suffer me to write, yet to my fellow Schollers about this Citie, will I direct these sewe insuing lines.

To.

To those Gentlemen his Quondam acquaintance, that spend their wits in making Playes, R. G. wisheth a better exercise, and wisedome to prevent his extremities.

F wofull experience may moove you (Gentlemen) to beware, or vnheard of wretchednes, intreat you to take hed: I doubt not but you will look backe with sorrow on your time past, and endeuour with repentance to spend that which is to come. Wonder not, (for with thee will I first beginne) thou famous gracer of Tragedians, that Green, who hath said with thee like the fole in his heart, There is no God, should now give glorie vnto his greatnesse: for penetrating is his power, his hand lyes heavy vpon me, he hath spoken vnto me with a voyce of thunder, and I have left, he is a God that can punish enemies. Why should thy excellent wit, his gift be sublinded, that thou shouldest give no glory to the Giver? Is it pestilent Machiuilian policie that thou hast studied? O punish follie! What are his rules but mere confused mockeries, able to extirpate in small time, the generati-

on of mankinde. For if *Sic volo, sic iubeo*, holde in those that are able to commaund: and if it be lawfull *Fas et Nefas*, to doo any thing that is beneficiall; onely Tyrants should possesse the Earth, and they striuing to exceed in tiranny, should ech to other be a slaughter man: till the mightyest out-liuing all, one stroke were left for Death, that in one age mans life should end. The Brother of this Diabolicall Atheisme is dead, and in his life had never the felicitie he aymed at: but as he beganne in craft, liued in feare, and ended in dispaire. *Quàm inscrutabilia sunt Dei iudicia!* This murderer of many Brethren, had his conscience seared like Cayne: this betrayer of him that gaue his life for him, inherited the portion of Iudas: this Apostata perished as ill as Iulian: and wilt thou my Friend, be his Disciple? Looke vnto mée, by him perswaded to that Libertie, and thou shalt finde it an Internall bondage. I know the least of my demerits merit this miserable death, but will'ull striuing against knowne truth, exceedeth all the terrors of my soule. Deferre not (with mée) till this last point of extremitie: for little knowest thou how in the end thou shalt be vsed.

With this I leyne young Iuuenall, that byting Satyrist, that lastly with mée together writ a Comedie. Sweet Boy, might I aduise thee, be aduised, and get not vnto my enemies by bitter words: inueigh against vaine men, for thou canst pouit, no man better, no man so well: thou hast a libertie to reprooue all, and name none: for one being spoken to, all are offended, none beeing blamed, no man is iniuried. Stoy shallow water still running, it will rage; tread

on a worme, and it will turne: then blame not Schollers who are vexed with sharpe and bitter Lines, if they reproue thy too much liberty of reproofe.

And thou no lesse deseruing then the other two, in some things rarer, in nothing inferiour, driuen (as my selfe to extreame shifts, a little haue I to say to thee: and were it not an idolatrous oath, I would sweare by sweet S. George, thou art vnworthy better hap, sith thou dependest on so mean a stay. Base minded men all three of you, if by my misery yée bee not warned: for vnto none of you (like me) sought those bees to creane: those Puppits (I meane) that speake from our mouths, those Anticks garnisht in our colours. Is it not strange that I, to whome they all haue bin beholding: is it not like that you, to whom they all haue bin beholding, shall seeme yée in that case that I am now? be both of them at once forsaken? Yes trust them not: for there is an vpstart Crow beautified with our Feathers, that with his Tygres heart, wrapt in a Players hyde, supposes hee is as well able to bombast out a blank-verse, as the best of you: and being an absolute *Iohannes fac totum*, is in his owne conceit the onely Shake-scene in a Countrey. Oh that I might intreat your rare wittes to bee imployed to more profitable courses: and let these Apes imitate your past excellence, and neuer more acquaynte them with your admired inuentions. I know the best Husband of you all will never proue an vsurer, and the kindest of them all will never proue a kinde Nurse: yet whilst you may seeke you better Maisters: for it is pitty men of such

such rare wits should bee subject to the pleasures of such rude groomes.

In this I might infert two more, that both haue written against these buckram Gentlemen: but let their owne workes serue to witnesse against their owne wickednesse, if they presume to maintaine any more such peasants. For other new commers, I leaue them to the merrie of those painted monsters, who (I doubt not) will haue the best minded to despise them: for the rest, it skils not though they make a iest at them.

But now returne I again to you three, knowing my minde is to you no newes: and let me heartilie intreate you to be warned by my harmes. Delight not (as I haue done,) in freelinesse oaths, for from the blasphemers house, a curse shall not depart: Despise drunkennesse, which maketh the wit, and making men all equall onto beasts: Flee Lust, as the deathsman of the soule, and defile not the Temple of the holy Ghost. Abhorre those Epicures, whose loose life hath made Religion loathsome to your eares, and when they seeth you with teares of mastership, remember Robert Greene, whome they haue often so flattered, perishes now for want of comfort. Remember Gentlemen your liues are like so many light tapers, that are with care deliuered to all of you to maintaine: those with wind put out, may be extinguished, which drunkennesse put out, which negligence let fall: for many time of it selfe is not so short, but it is more shortened by sinne. The fire of my light is now at the last snuffe, & the want of wherewith to sustaine it, there is no substance

for life to feed on. Trust not them (I beseech yee) left to such weake stayes: for they are as changeable in minde, as in many attires. Well my hand is tyred, and I am forst to leaue where I would beginne: for a whole booke cannot contain their wrongs, which I am forst to knit vp in some few lines of Words.

Desirous that you should liue, though himselfe be dying.

ROBERT GREENE.

Now to all men I bid farewell *in this sort, with this conceited Fable of the olde Comedian Aesop.*

AN Ant and a Grathopper walking together on a greene, the one carelesly skiping, the other carefully prying what Winters prouision was scattered in the way: the Grathopper scorning (as wantons will) this needlesse thrift (as he tearmed it) reproued him thus.

The

The greedie miser thirsteth still for goine,
His thrift is theft, his weale workes others woe,
That foole is fond which will in caues remaine,
When mongst faire sweetes he may at pleasure go.

To this the Ant perceiuing the Grashoppers meaning, quickly replyed:

The thriftie husband spares what vnthrifts spends
His thrift no theft, for dangers to prouide,
Trust to thy selfe, small hope in wanty eeld friends
A caue is better then the desarts wilde.

In short time these two parted, the one to his pleasure, the other to his labor. Anon Harueſt grew on, and reft from the Grashopper his wonted moisture. Then weakely skippes he to the meadowes brinks, where till fell winter he abode. But stormes continually powring, he went for succour to the Ant his olde acquaintance, to whom he had scarce discouered his estate, but the little worme made this replie.

Packe hence (quoth he) thou idle lazie worme,
My house doth harbour no vnthrifty mates: (storm
Thou scornedst to toyle, and now thou feelst the
And starust for food, while I am fed with cates,
Vse no intreats, I will relentlesse rest,
For toyling labour hates an idle guest.

The Grashopper foodles, helpeles, and strengthlesse, got into the next brook, and in the yeilding sand digde

digge himselfe a pitte: by which likewise he engraued this Epitaph.

When Springs greene prime arrayde me with delight,
And euery power with youthfull vigour filde,
Gaue strength to worke what euer fancie wilde,
I neuer fearde the force of winters spight.

When first I saw the Sunne the day beginne,
And drie the mornings teares from herbes and grasse,
I little thought his cheerefull light would passe,
Till vgly night with darkenesse entered in,
And then day lost I mournde, spring past I wailde,
But neither teares for this or that auailde.

Then too too late I praisde the Emmets paine,
That sought in spring a harbour gainst the heate,
And in the harvest gathered winters meate,
Perceiuing famine, frosts, and stormie raine.

My wretched end may warne Greene springing youth,
To vse delights, as toyes that will deceyue,
And scorne the world, before the world them leaue,
For all worlds trust, is ruine without ruth.
Then blest are they that like the toyling Ant.
Prouide in time gainst wofull winters want.

With this the Groathopper yeilding to the weathers extremitie, dyed causeleslie without remedie. Like him my selfe: like me, shall all that trust to friends or times inconstancie. Now faint I of my last infirmitie, beseching

ching them that shall bury my bodie, to publish this last farewell, written with my wretched hand.

Fœlicem fuisse infaustum.

A Letter written to his Wife, found with this Booke after his death.

The remembrance of many wrongs offered thee, and thy unreprooued vertues, adde greater sorrow to my miserable state then I can vtter, or thou conceiue. Neyther is it lessened by consideration of thy absence, (though thauns would let me hardly behold thy face) but exceedingly aggrauated, for that I cannot (as I ought) to thy owne sele reconcile my selfe, that thou mightest witnesse my inward woe at this instant, that haue made thee a woefull wife for so long a time. But equal heauen hath denied that comfort, giuing at my last neede, the succour as I haue sought all my life: being in this extremitie as voyde of helpe, as thou hast beene of hope. Reason would, that after so long waste, I should not send thee a childe to bring thee greater charge: but consider how is the

fruit of thy wombe, in whose face regard not the Fathers so much, as thy owne perfections. Yet is yet Greene, and may grow strait, if he be carefully tended: otherwise apt enough (I feare me) to follow his Fathers Folly. That I haue offended thee highly, I know, that thou canst forgette my iniuries I hardly believe: yet perswade I my selfe, if thou saw my wretched estate, thou couldest not but lament it: nay, certainely I know thou wouldest. Many wrongs musster themselues about me, euery euill at once plagues me. For my contempt of God, I am contemned of men: for my swearing and forswearing, no man will believe me, for my gluttony I suffer hunger: for my drunkennes, thirst for my adulteries, vlcerous sores. Thus God hath cast me downe, that I might be humbled: and punished me for example of others sinns: and although he suffers me in this world to perish without succour, yet trust I in the world to come to find merry, by the merits of my Sauiour, to whom I comment thee, and commit my soule.

Thy repentant husband

for his disloyaltie,

ROBERT GREENE.

Fœlicem fuisse infaustum.

FINIS.

FINIS.

GREENES
EPITAPH:

Discoursed Dialogue-wise betweene *Life* and *Death.*

LIFE.

STay *grizly* Thanatos, *pull backe thy spleene,*
Triumpher ouer Tombes, *what hast thou done?*
To blast the Muses Lawrell, *which was* Geeene;
Minerua's *nurse-child, great* Apollo's *sonne:*
O what i'st, made of Mold, thy stabbe can stoun?
Sure th' hast no eyes to dart at random so;
To strike the Cedar, *let the Muse-rumpe grow.*

where Life *is loa'd, tha'rt too too quicke to kill,*
And to epitomize, with pangs, their ioy:
where Life *is ioath'd, tha'rt slow, and backward still,*

And dost adiourne their death *with* lifes annoy:
Thus Tyrant-like, the Best, *dost still* destroy:
To some thou art a sterne vnbidden guest,
But who implore thy helpe, thou helpest least.

DEATH.

Why wouldst creepe longer on this dustie Round,
Where wealth's *but* want; *where Treasures* won, *but lost*;
Where all good Hopes, *in one* ill-hap, *are drown'd,*
In some things, all: in all things, some are crost;
And they but little, *that possesse the* most.
Vnmixed Ioyes, *to none on earth befall,*
Who least ha's some, *who most*, *ha's never* all.

For that, must I his purer Part *vnshroude,*
(A Kings command cannot withstand my right)
And giue his prison'd Soule, *midst mistie* Cloud,
A larger Horizon t'emblaze her light:
Her Beauty *then appearing Sun-like bright,*
Shall shunne the earth, to shine (fore Angels eyes)
In Blisse, *aboue the Star-bespangled skies.*

LIFE.

You sacred Sisters, from whose Bosome's crept,
A fresher Flower, *then by* Alcinous *bred:*
Through your Eyes Lymbecke, let your loues be drept,
(Though often true, that more oft ha's been sayd,
The fayrer Flower, *the sooner withered)*
To keepe him Greene, *with world out-wearing Rimes,*
To th'admiration of succeeding Times.

Hee, *whose gold-tipped, Eare-attrahting* Toung,
with rare Cyllenian *Musicke charmed so,*
As Marbles danc'd, when Thebes Musitian *sung.*
Let rowling Teares in Pleni-tides oreflow,
For losse of Englands *second* Cicero.
To make's not being, *he, as* he *hath beene,*
Greene, *neuer-wither'd, euer-wither'd* Greene.

I. H.

FINIS.